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January 1, 1947

BMC

New Year's Day at BMC is rainy with a threat of sleet if it continues to get colder, as the weather man predicts it will. The rock walk to the dining hall squirts muddy water upward; brown rivers follow the roadway from the Studies Building; the mountains are obscure in heavy mist. It's a dreary day outside, but I see a cardinal in the tree near Wallen's.

We all (that's Southern, like "you all") here at BMC have had a grand vacation. It has been grand from the very day when the bus left for Washington and the Bolotowsky car left for New York (sorry about the puncture, Ilya; we heard about it from the Niebys) and Williams and Bergman, Inc. left for Chicago (pardon me, Hank, Beaver Dam). But we are beginning to miss all of you. Lore, it was good of you to write and ask when college opens; (in case others don't know, classes begin at 8:30 a.m. Wednesday, January 8; we expect most of you on January 7 and will welcome you back with spaghetti for lunch and hamburger for supper). And Hank, it was good of you to write for your ration book, which was probably in John's pocket. And Pepe it was good of you to write for more money, especially since you wanted to buy your mother a Christmas present. All such messages are welcome by those of us shut out of the world in this rainy little mountain valley.

Hitting the high-spots of the holiday at BMC

1. Our new Caroling Group. Theme song: "Christmas is coming,
The Goose is getting fat;
Please to put a penny
In the old man's hat."

A delightful round inaugurated by John Wallen, with Molly as official starter, and the rest joining in! Christmas Eve about fourteen of us sung carols, including the round, at Oteen Annex (formerly Moore General Hospital). While Bobbie, Franziska, and Evelyn hurried around handing out song sheets to the patients and asking them to join in the singing, Molly pitched the tune (once or twice) then Rondy and John picked it up, and by that time the three paper girls were back and everyone got in on the second line. We sang in about twelve wards and considering our age, we kept fairly well on the key to the bitter end (not quite as well as does the barber shop quartet -- boys, they want you to come down sometime!); anyway, our spirits were good, and after it was over we got more spirits at the Elliott Merricks.

2. Santa Claus; single or plural? There was a lot of discussion the day before Christmas about Santa Claus -- whether he was or wasn't; whether he was single or plural, etc., etc. Faf said NO to everything; but Asawa said YES, so in the end the stockings were hung by the fireplace with care in South Lodge, and Santa did come, and in the end, that is before morning, there were five Santas at work and the stockings were found at daybreak -- filled -- with left-overs in a corner for the unbelievers (Al found these). Like Morton Salt "It never rains but it pours", so with the Santas. Two of them were seen by inquisitive members of the community at midnight in South Lodge; three were heard and seen in the early morning hours between 4:30 and 6 a.m. Faculty homes were ruthlessly entered (but no faculty were carried away). The Wallen's felt the chill of the night air as their living room door was opened and closed; the Rondys heard the thud as one Santa fell headlong over their faithful watchdog, Jake, asleep in the hallway; the Levi's were awakened by the giggling caroling; the Niebys slept through it; Molly was semi-conscious of the intrusion; as for Eddie Lowinsky, he knew it was burglars climbing in the window (moral, Eddie, never lock the doors on Christmas Eve). Daylight brought the evidence -- huge, ginger cookies in queer shapes -- trains, cows, horses, faces with cow-catcher whiskers (guess whose) -- all found on tables and chairs in the faculty households. But at breakfast at nine, there were no Santas present.

3. Forwarding Mail. This was B's job. She did an especially good job on mail going to Tampa, Florida, and Crewe, Virginia. Forwarding mail is a tricky job, especially when we don't have any forwarding addresses! We did know Neil was in New York, but we weren't sure of Dan Rice's address, but we hope he got all of his mail. Reading the postcards was exciting; but there weren't enough of them. Wondering what was in the Christmas packages was exciting and we'll be hanging around when Susie Teasdale opens those wonderful pears and Dan opens the box of dates from California. We might even hang around when Squeaky opens his big box of kapok sleeping bags. We tried to get Charlie Boyce's package through to France -- we knew about the girl there (maybe it was Germany), but in spite of Ed Adamy's declarations, the package came back a third time and is here now, so Charlie is "alone in the pines, where the cold wind blows" so far as that particular girl is concerned.